

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON REFORMS, RESTRUCTURING AND REINVENTING HEARING ON HOUSE
BILL 4059, May 22, 2012
REMARKS OF NICK CIARAMITARO, DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC POLICY
MICHIGAN AFSCME COUNCIL 25**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to speak. For the record, my name is Nick Ciaramitaro and I am Director of Legislation and Public Policy for the Michigan Council of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees. Michigan AFSCME Council 25 represents over 50,000 hard working women and men who make so many of the services that we take for granted every day happen in our State. That work includes keeping our buildings clean and safe, maintaining our roads and highways, assuring safe drinking water and sanitary sewage disposal, providing necessary services in schools, cities, counties, mental health facilities, public and private hospitals, and more. Our members are not the highest paid government workers but they provide services which enrich each of our lives every day. Every one of us used one or more of their services already today, maybe without even realizing it.

Michigan AFSCME is opposed to House Bill 4059 not only because it is an affront to our members and to the collective bargaining process but because it will make providing those necessary, virtually unnoticed services harder to deliver to the people of the State of Michigan.

There are generally four major groups of workers in Michigan. Those who are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement, union private sector workers where labor/management relations are generally covered (and pre-empted) by federal law, State Civil Service workers whose terms and conditions of employment are covered by Civil Service Rules, and union local and municipal employees governed by the Public Employees Relations Act (PERA). This bill only applies to the last category.

The bill *prohibits* a public sector employer from entering into a collective bargaining agreement that provides for paid union leave time. Employers remain free to grant paid leave time for any purpose to supervisory or other non-union staff and the practice of bargaining for union leave time will remain common practice (as it is now) in private union and non-union employment relationships.

This unique prohibition will create several problems for local government.

First, it is important to remember that local units come in all sizes and systems. Many of these units have developed easy and simple processes for settling labor disputes when they arise. If management and labor cannot work those problems out quickly and on the spot, those problems will grow leading to more and more problems with costlier and costlier methods of settlement. It is cheaper, quicker, easier and more productive for management, employee and taxpayers alike to settle a small dispute quickly than to allow it to escalate. The later could lead to arbitration which is costly to management and labor alike.

Contract implementation is one problem that will become more difficult under this bill but achieving a contract could become very costly for employers. While bargaining units may or may not be compensated for contract negotiation time, management representatives always are. If contract negotiations are forced to unusual times and days to accommodate workers' schedules, management may have to absorb higher costs for their representatives at the bargaining table.

We have often been told we should emulate the private sector by this Legislature. As I pointed out earlier collective bargaining agreements that provide for paid union leave time are quite common in the private sector. That is because they are an efficient means of maintaining labor/management relations so critical for high performance and productivity.

Organizations which were set up just for the purpose of improving those relationships have attested to this fact and to the problems this legislation would cause in writing. You have received, and we have received copies of, letters sent to you by the Upper Peninsula Labor Management Council, the co-chair of the Kalamazoo Area Labor-Management Committee, and one signed by most of the members of the Michigan Labor Management Association urging you to vote no on this bill. I have attached copies of these letters and other employer letters to my written remarks for the committee's convenience.

Let me quote briefly from the Michigan Labor Management Association Committee letter:

"This bill would greatly hinder cooperative labor and management relationships ... (and) create a difficult environment ...

We have worked ... to foster excellence and cooperation within business environments ... over the last 30 years ... helped many public sector and private sector groups ... in meeting customers' fundamental expectations in the delivery of much improved quality of services and outcomes.

The labor-management cooperation not only improved services, they also reduced their cost on many programs by 35% or more

This pending bill would deal a significant blow ...

... House bill 4059, if passed, will do irreparable harm ..."

These are not my words, but the testimony of public and private sector **employers** alike.

Disputes in the private sector can and often do lead to labor strife – even to the point of strikes. Public sectors have seen very little of that because we work very hard to maintain good relations and resolve problems early.

If has often been suggested that provisions of this nature are in local contracts – contracts agreed to by management and labor alike – because unions are somehow able to bully them into existence. You have already passed legislation penalizing public sector union members if an agreement is not reached but providing for no penalties if management holds out. Public sector workers are prohibited from withholding their services by law. And when impasse is reached public sector employers can and do impose contracts on their employees.

Members of this Committee have asked what union dues are used for if not to compensate for all management labor discussions. The fact is that union dues are used primarily for the purpose of collective bargaining. Council 25 is a service union that provides expert advice and services to local member decision makers. Those member decision makers provide local services most of the time and are rarely compensated for their union activities. The amount of employer compensated time is minimal and used primarily as a convenience to the employer, the local unit and to make sure that local services are not disrupted.

The substitute bill before you makes some exceptions to the prohibition in the act for certain first responders. That list is woefully inadequate. AFSCME represents people who work at many 24/7 institutions where the provisions of this act will be particularly problematic – places like mental health facilities, nursing homes and hospitals just to name a few.

The State has the right to set policy but it is a dangerous course to try to micromanage each local unit of government. They are all different. Many do not use paid leave except for short periods of time to deal with immediate problems. Some larger units find it more convenient and economical to have one person on full or part time leave to handle all problems as they arise. That is and should be a local decision. The State should look for ways to improve labor management relationships, improve efficiency and foster quality delivery of services. The small amount of money that might be saved here will do just the opposite and will more than likely be offset by added costs as well. We hope you will oppose reporting House Bill 4059 to the Senate floor. Thank you, again for your time.



May 18, 2012

Senator Tom Casperson
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 4898-7536

Dear Member Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee:

The Upper Peninsula Labor Management Council has been an effective and progressive organization in Michigan's Upper Peninsula for 42 years. During that time the UPLMC has promoted cooperative Labor and Management Relations throughout Michigan and the Midwest by providing workshops to local unions and businesses as well as an annual conference to promote harmonious relations between Labor and Management in the private and public sectors. Our goal has been and will continue to be to promote Labor and Management cooperation within all of our organizations. We recognize the rights of Labor and Management to co-exist and prosper. Some of our most notable accomplishments are as follows:

- Provided Labor and Management training to over 7,000 high school students in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Represent over 15,000 employees and 500 employer members in the Upper Peninsula.
- Conducted workshops to train both Labor and Management in many areas which helps promote and foster positive Labor and Management relations. Great for Michigan's business climate.
- Successfully completed the 42nd Annual Conference at the Island Resort & Casino, Harris. Annual attendance on the average often exceeds 150 Labor and Management Leaders.
- Established a \$500 High School Scholarship program in memory of Gerald Kendzioriski, State of Michigan Mediator.

Recent legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern for the directors, officers and members of the Upper Peninsula Labor Management Council. This Bill would greatly hinder cooperative Labor and Management relations within the State of Michigan and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employees and employers have worked diligently to foster excellent business environments and

Senator Tom Casperson

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May 18, 2012

relationships in which business has excelled in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations in the delivery of first class services and products to the residents of the Upper Peninsula.

This pending Bill would deal a significant blow to how Labor and Management works to improve services to all entities. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on Labor and Management relations for the State of Michigan.

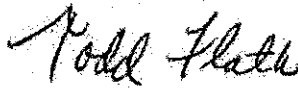
Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm Labor and Management relationships that have taken decades to build. This Bill, if passed, will do irreparable harm not only to unions but also to management who have come to rely on employee involvement and continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the Great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



Laura Katers Reilly
Co-Chair, Management



Todd Flath 
Co-Chair, Labor

May 22, 2012

Senator Name

Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee

P.O. Box 30036

Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Senator and Committee Member NAME,

Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern to our organization, the Michigan-Labor Management Association (MLMA). This bill would greatly hinder cooperative labor and management relationships within the State of Michigan, and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employees and employers have worked directly with change process organizations, including many Michigan leaders and process trainers. We have worked along with the grant programs through the Federal Mediation Conciliation Services (FMCS) to foster excellence and cooperation within business environments through building positive labor-management relationships over the last 30 years. This process has helped many public sector and private sector groups to be noticed in meeting customers' fundamental expectations in the delivery of much improved quality of services and outcomes to the residents of the State of Michigan.

The MLMA's annual "**Partners in Progress**" conference is one of few statewide labor - management events in the country. We have continued to showcase the labor-management efforts as in the City of Southfield's Job Enrichment Employee Productivity (JEEP) Program. The program was handed down from the private sector and shared with us. The labor-management cooperation not only improved services, they also reduced their cost on many programs by 35% or more. This was a major change in the way public sector conducted business. This labor-management process is very influential with today's economic conditions. Labor and management have learned over the past three decades that they can work together cooperatively to meet their common goals.

This pending bill would deal a significant blow to how labor and management would work together. They do this to build better relationships by developing quality services and increased productivity. Often, problems are solved easily and expeditiously by meeting with the employees to discuss solutions. Under the proposed bill such meetings would be prohibited. Labor and management have worked hard to build these relationship between employees, including unions, and management. At times their meetings were held during paid time, and other times these meetings were after work hours, on their own time. Such flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on labor-management discretion and individual circumstances and not mandated by law. I urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on labor and management relations for all public sectors within our great State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's difficulties. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm labor-management relationships that have taken decades to build. This House Bill 4059, if passed, will do irreparable harm to the

"Change Process" that has taken three decades to build. This process, that impacts the way labor/management representatives have come together over time, has created continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

MLMA Board Representatives,

Michael Reeber, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources. Chippewa Valley Schools

Rich Isaacson, Administrative Assistant, International Union, UAW and MLMA Labor Co-chair

Kent Sharkey, President and CEO, Ulliance Inc.

Bill Gill, Commissioner, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service

Berteen Ewles, Staff Representative, UAW, Region 1C

Doreen Brinson, Human Resources and Labor Relations, Western Michigan University

Ronald Torakis, Associate Vice President, Health Alliance Plan

Dr. Greg Huszycz, Professor and author, Eastern Michigan University

Ed Haynor, Director, West Michigan Construction Alliance

Cynthia Corbin, Program Coordinator, MLMA

Edgell Turnquist, Director, MLMA

Michigan Labor-Management Association

36500 Ford Rd. #264

Westland, MI 48185

734-354-8736

Kalamazoo area Labor Management Committee
From: Kathleen Cantley [k.cantley@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, May 18, 2012 3:19 PM
To: nick@miafscme.org
Subject: HB 4059

Hi Nick! I know you have been busy helping to protect our rights! I sent the following letter to the members of the committee on HB 4059:

Senator Jansen,
I am writing you today to strongly urge you to NOT to pass House Bill 4059. This bill would nullify mutually negotiated, mutually beneficial Union Release time. In most all cases, these provisions were negotiated and paid for through these negotiations. These provisions allow for a level playing field for Management and the collective bargaining units to negotiate contracts, and handle discipline and grievances. They, in many cases allow for Management and the Union officials to come together and solve problems before having to go through the grievances and arbitration process. Having good Labor Management relations is a vital part of what makes our negotiations such a success on both sides of the table.

Again, HB 4059 is bad for our work forces and wrong for the Legislature to take away our mutually negotiated language. I urge you not to pass this bill.

Thank you,
Kathleen Cain-Babbitt
Co-Chair for the Kalamazoo Area Labor- Management Committee

Thanks for all you do!

Kathleen Cain-Babbitt
Chief Steward, AFSCME 1668

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. ~Martin Luther King Jr.

5/22/12

Dear Member Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee:

Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern for the Upper Peninsula Labor Management Council. This Bill would greatly hinder cooperative Labor and Management relations within the State of Michigan and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employees and employers have worked diligently to foster excellent business environments and relationships in which business has excelled in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations in the delivery of first class services and products to the residents of the State of Michigan.

This pending Bill would deal a significant blow to how Labor and Management works to improve services to all entities. Often problems are solved easily and expeditiously by meeting with the Union to discuss solutions, under the proposal such meeting would be prohibited. We have worked hard to build a relationship with all employees, including the Union, at times meeting during paid time and at times meeting after work hours, such flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on the individual circumstances and not mandated by law. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on Labor and Management relations for the State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm Labor and Management relationships that have taken decades to build. This Bill, if passed, will do irreparable harm not only to unions but also to management who have come to rely on employee involvement and continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the Great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shirley Dishaw Beck RN

Dear Member Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee:

Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern me. My name is Edgell W. Turnquist, retired Water Serviceman III, President Local 329 and AFSCME Union Representative from City of Southfield. This Bill would greatly hinder cooperative Labor and Management relations within the State of Michigan and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employees and employers have worked directly with the Federal Mediation Conciliation Services over the last 30 years to foster excellent business environments and labor management relationships. This process has helped many public sector groups to be noticeable in meeting customer's fundamental expectations in the delivery of much improved quality services and outcomes to the residents of the State of Michigan. I worked under a very successful program called the JEEP Process, handed down from the GM environment and the City of Troy it stands for Job Enrichment Employee Productivity. We not only improved services we reduced our cost on many programs by 35% or more. This was a major change in the way public sector conducts business and is very influential in today economic conditions. Labor and Management have learned over the past three decades that they can work together to meet their goals.

This pending Bill would deal a significant blow to how Labor and Management would works together to improve services. They do this to build better relationships by developing quality services and increased productivity and building to all entities. Often problems are solved easily and expeditiously by meeting with the employee's to discuss solutions, under the proposal such meeting would be prohibited. We had worked hard to build our relationship between our employee's, including their Union, and management and at times meeting were during paid time and at times meeting were after work hours on our own time. Such flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on Labor Management discretion, individual circumstances and not mandated by law. I urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on Labor and Management relations for all Public Sectors within our great State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's difficulties. I hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm Labor and Management relationships that have taken decades to build. This Bill, if passed, will do irreparable harm to the "Change Process" that has taken three decade to build. This Process that impacts the way labor/management representatives today have come together over time that created continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the Great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
Edgell W. Turnquist

Edgell W. Turnquist
5618 Deerwood Ln
Commerce Twp., MI 48382
248-676-0255



Senator Tom Casperson
38th District
125 W. Allegan St.
Lansing, MI 48909

By FAX: (517) 373-3932

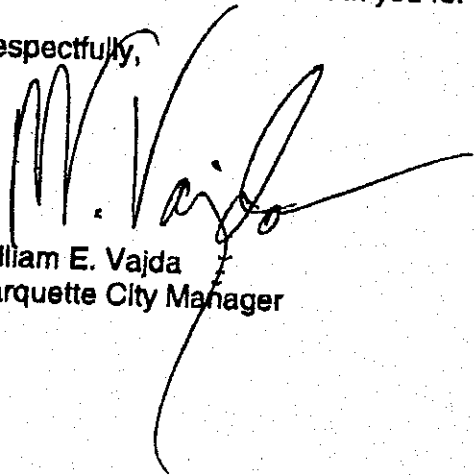
Dear Senator Casperson:

Proposed legislation contained in House Bill 4059 is a concern for the City of Marquette. This bill would greatly hinder cooperative labor and management relations and create a difficult environment in which to conduct City business. City employees and management have worked cooperatively over many years to foster relationships in which we can excel in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations.

This pending bill would significantly impair how labor and management works together. Problems often solved easily by expeditious meetings with the Union occur during the course of normal work hours, or at times, after work hours. Negotiating response times would be a mutual burden for both management and the union. Flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on the local circumstances and not mandated by law. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation could have on labor and management relations for the State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,


William E. Vajda
Marquette City Manager

ISHPEMING AREA JOINT WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY

700 Sunset Drive, Ishpeming, MI 49849 • (906) 486-4391 • Fax (906) 486-6997 • iawwts@sbcglobal.net

May 21, 2012

Dear Member Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee:

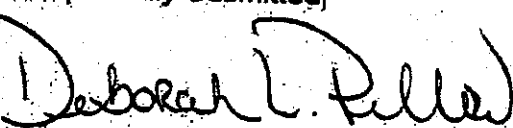
Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern for the Ishpeming Area Wastewater Authority Board. This Bill would greatly hinder cooperative Management and Labor relations within the State of Michigan and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employers and employees have worked diligently to foster excellent business environments and relationships in which business has excelled in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations in the delivery of first class services and products to the residents of the State of Michigan.

This pending Bill would deal a significant blow to how Labor and Management work to improve services to all entities. Often problems are solved easily and expeditiously by meeting with the Union to discuss solutions. Under this proposed legislation such meetings would be prohibited. We have worked hard to build a good relationship with are employees, including the Union, at times meeting during paid time and at times meeting after work hours, such flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on the individual circumstances and not mandated by law. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on Management and Labor relations for the State of Michigan. Labor issues and any meetings necessary should be set between Management and Labor not the State Legislator as part of law.

Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm Management and Labor relationships that have taken decades to build. This Bill, if passed, will do irreparable harm not only to unions but also to management who have come to rely on employee involvement and continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the Great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



Deborah L. Pellow, Director
IAJWWTF



Senator Tom Casperson
38th District
125 W. Allegan St.
Lansing, MI 48909

By FAX: (517) 373-3932

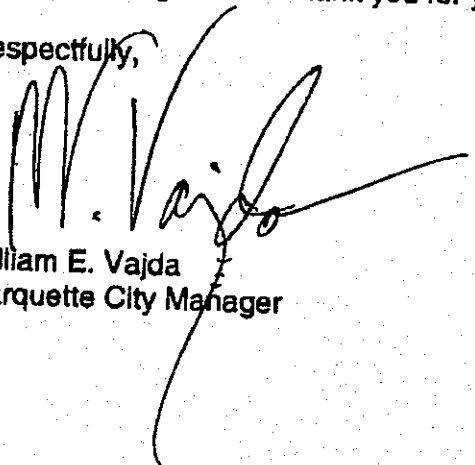
Dear Senator Casperson:

Proposed legislation contained in House Bill 4059 is a concern for the City of Marquette. This bill would greatly hinder cooperative labor and management relations and create a difficult environment in which to conduct City business. City employees and management have worked cooperatively over many years to foster relationships in which we can excel in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations.

This pending bill would significantly impair how labor and management works together. Problems often solved easily by expeditious meetings with the Union occur during the course of normal work hours, or at times, after work hours. Negotiating response times would be a mutual burden for both management and the union. Flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on the local circumstances and not mandated by law. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation could have on labor and management relations for the State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,


William E. Vajda
Marquette City Manager



KIRBY D. JUNTILA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOARD OF LIGHT AND POWER

CITY OF MARQUETTE
2200 WRIGHT STREET
MARQUETTE, MI 49855-1398

PHONE 906-228-0313
FAX 906-228-0329
PLANT FAX 906-228-0359

May 18, 2012

Senator Tom Casperson
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7840

Re: House Bill 4059

Dear Senator Casperson:

Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concerns for the Marquette Board of Light and Power. This bill would hinder our cooperative relationship with our Union, Local 510, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and create an environment which would make it more difficult to conduct business in and negatively affect some of our strategic objectives. All of our employees have worked very diligently to foster harmonious relationships in which our business has excelled in meeting and exceeding the expectations of our customers.

Some of the more salient concerns that we have are as follows:

1. We could see this bill as potentially impacting the safety of our employees and the public because of the joint efforts of our Labor/Management Safety Committee's which is tasked with overall employee safety, evaluation/implementation of safety rules and standards, and public education of school children with safety related programming jointly sponsored by the company and union. In addition, our members attend safety conferences where they receive invaluable training which they bring back to the workplace.
2. In addition, as a result of our safety and workman's compensation successes we have been able to cut our experience modifier (a formula used in determining work comp rates) by over 50% which has saved the public thousands of dollars on an annual basis. This is a direct result of the work that we have jointly accomplished by our Labor and Management Relationship.
3. Our joint Labor and Management Committee (during off hours) has also on an annual basis cleaned beaches and highways making Michigan a more beautiful place to live, work and conduct business in.
4. Finally, through our harmonious relationship in Labor and Management Relations, we have not had a grievance or arbitration in over 7 years. Through effective Labor and Management relations we work constantly to improve upon our business model and engage all of our employees in doing the right thing, the first time and every time. Needless to say, this has saved countless hours and thousands of dollars for our customers who enjoy first class service that all of our employees provide.



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The Marquette Board of Light and Power has been run as a business since 1889 in the public sector. We are recognized by the American Public Power Association as a Platinum Level, RP3, Energy Provider, which we could not have achieved without the diligent efforts of all involved in the Labor and Management relationship.

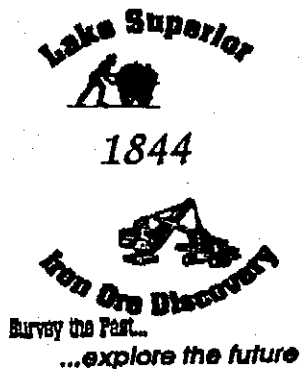
We urge you to evaluate these points as you consider your position on this pending bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration in evaluating our point of view.

Sincerely,



Paul A. Kitti
Assistant Director
CC: File



CITY OF NEGAUNEE

P.O. Box 70
Negaunee, Michigan 49866
(906) 475-7700
TDD (906) 475-9400
Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider

Dear Member Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee:

Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern for the City of Negaunee. This Bill would greatly hinder cooperative Labor and Management relations within the State of Michigan and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employees and employers have worked diligently to foster excellent business environments and relationships in which business has excelled in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations in the delivery of first class services and products to the residents of the State of Michigan.

This pending Bill would deal a significant blow to how Labor and Management works to improve services to all entities. Often problems are solved easily and expeditiously by meeting with the Union to discuss solutions, under the proposal such meeting would be prohibited. We have worked hard to build a relationship with all employee, including the Union, at times meeting during paid time and at times meeting after work hours, such flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on the individual circumstances and not mandated by law. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on Labor and Management relations for the State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm Labor and Management relationships that have taken decades to build. This Bill, if passed, will do irreparable harm not only to unions but also to management who have come to rely on employee involvement and continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the Great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Haines, Mayor

"ON THE BANKS OF MAJESTIC TEAL LAKE"

Marquette County Medical Care Facility
200 Saginaw Street
Ishpeming, Mi 49849

Dear Member Senate Reforms, Restructuring and Reinventing Committee:

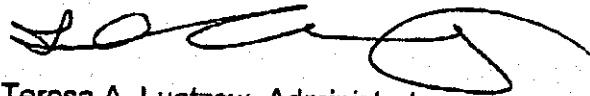
Proposed legislation on House Bill 4059 draws concern for the Marquette County Medical Care Facility. This Bill would greatly hinder cooperative Labor and Management relations within the State of Michigan and create a difficult environment in which to conduct business. Public employees and employers have worked diligently to foster excellent business environments and relationships in which business has excelled in meeting customer, public and constituent expectations in the delivery of first class services and products to the residents of the State of Michigan.

This pending Bill would deal a significant blow to how Labor and Management works to improve services to all entities. Often problems are solved easily and expeditiously by meeting with the Union to discuss solutions, under the proposal such meeting would be prohibited. We have worked hard to build a relationship with all employee, including the Union, at times meeting during paid time and at times meeting after work hours, such flexibility is necessary and should be determined based on the individual circumstances and not mandated by law. We urge you to evaluate the grass roots impact such legislation would have on Labor and Management relations for the State of Michigan.

Together we can solve the state's problems. We hereby respectfully request you vote against this legislation which will harm Labor and Management relationships that have taken decades to build. This Bill, if passed, will do irreparable harm not only to unions but also to management who have come to rely on employee involvement and continuous improvement to better serve everyone in the Great State of Michigan.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



Teresa A. Luetzow, Administrator

May 22, 2012

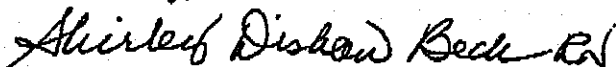
Senator Casperson,

I have been a member of the negotiating team for the Michigan Nurses Association here at Dickinson County Hospital since 1993. This professional union represents approximately 175 registered nurses. During that time we have worked cooperatively utilizing the interest based bargaining negotiation style with hospital management. This has produced improved working relationships and, I believe, ultimately an improvement in patient care and delivery. In addition, we meet quarterly and have very productive labor/management meetings all with a goal of improving patient care.

This year I became involved in the UP Labor Management Council's Board of Directors and I have observed first hand union and management leaders working together to advance business development within the UP. This organization has been effective in improving the working environment for all through a focus on education.

I have been a professional union member my entire nursing career—30 years. I have worked in a variety of settings and departments and observed first hand how important good working relationships can be in the delivery of optimal patient care. Please take a step back and consider the negative consequences associated with this bill. The labor management relationship we have here at DCH is truly working. I would hate to have anything jeopardize that good work.

Sincerely,



Shirley Dishaw Beck RN BSN CCRN
Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation
Dickinson County Healthcare System